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'The Rock Was Christ': The Fluidity of Christ's Body in I Corinthians 10.4¹

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Abstract

Paul's identification of Christ with the rock that provided water to Israel in the wilderness has confounded interpreters. This article seeks to demonstrate that Paul depends upon a tradition within early Jewish thinking, as evidenced in poetic works such as Deut. 32, Ps. 78 and Ps. 95, which linked Israel's God to this rock. Despite growing unease with using rock imagery to describe God, as seen in Jeremiah's recasting of this tradition, as well as the consistent efforts of the LXX translators of the Hebrew Bible to render such language in less chthonic terms, Paul identified the rock with the presence of Christ in the wilderness, and therefore demonstrates his indebtedness to a conception of divine fluidity which Benjamin Sommer has explored in his recent book *The Bodies of God*.

Keywords

Christology, Deut. 32, divine embodiment, *pneuma*, wilderness rock

I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of the fact that all our fathers were under the cloud and all passed through the sea. And all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. And all ate the same pneumatic food, and all drank the same pneumatic drink. For they drank from the pneumatic rock which followed them—and

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the rock was Christ.² But God was not pleased with many of them, for they were scattered in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, so that we should not desire evil things, as they also desired (1 Cor. 10.1-6).

Paul's interpretation of Israel's wilderness period in 1 Cor. 10 has given rise to considerable scholarly literature. As most interpreters recognize, Paul here is dependent upon early Jewish interpretation that suggested that the rock which gave water in Exod. 17.6 was the same rock as that which provided water in Num. 20.7-11, the earliest evidence of which, outside of Paul, occurs in the late first-century CE work entitled *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* (10.7; cf. Fisk 2008). Although MT Exod. 17.6 and MT Num. 20.7-11 use different words for rock (צור and סלע respectively), a possible distinction which is erased by the LXX translators who render both words as πέτρα, even rabbinic interpreters of the Hebrew Bible made this connection (e.g., *m. Avot* 5.6; *t. Sukkah* 3.11; *b. Shabbat* 35a; *Num. Rab.* 1.2; 19.26). As Larry Kreitzer (1993: 110) notes, 'The fact that the two OT stories come from the beginning and end of the wilderness wanderings respectively gave rise to many rabbinic stories of the "rock of Horeb" following the people of Israel through the wanderings in the wilderness'.³ E. Earle Ellis (1957) and Peter Enns (1996) have provided helpful essays on the peripatetic rock (or moveable well) tradition in rabbinic literature, yet they fail to provide a compelling explanation for the way in which Paul could connect such a tradition to a person. On the surface, this equation seems far from evident. Consequently, Richard B. Hays (1989: 91) argues that 1 Cor. 10.1-4 contains 'fanciful analogies', 'startling figurative claims' and metaphors that 'should not be pressed'.

In this article I will examine Paul's identification of the rock with Christ in light of the Song of Moses (Deut. 32.1-43), Ps. 78 and Ps. 95, which use rock language of Israel's God within the context of referring to the wilderness rock traditions preserved in Exod. 17.6 and Num. 20.7-11. As I hope to show, in dependence upon these psalms, which refer to Israel's God as a rock within the context of a portrayal of Israel's wilderness period, Paul identifies Christ as a rock, thus making a startlingly high Christological claim.

2. While Martin (1995: 127) may be right that most readers 'take Paul's term "pneumatic" to be equivalent to the modern English term "spiritual", which usually designates something that is not "physical" or "natural"', I translate πνευματικόν as 'pneumatic' with the caveat that the word is *not* an antonym of 'physical' or 'natural'. See, for instance, the rather confusing comparison between the use of πνευματικόν in this passage and its use in 1 Cor. 15 in Fee 1987: 447 n. 30: '[T]here the resurrected body is "spiritual" in nature, being both "heavenly" in origin and nonmaterial in substance. In the present case [i.e., 1 Cor. 10.1-4], "spiritual" does not mean "nonmaterial", but it does seem to point to reality beyond the merely material or historical'. I will discuss the significance of a materialistic conception of *pneuma* in further depth below.
3. Modern interpreters of the Pentateuch, in contrast, generally ascribe the stories to two different authors, Num. 20 being a priestly rewriting of Exod. 17.1-7. See, for instance, Levine 1993: 483-85.

I Corinthians 10 and the Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32.1-43)

In identifying the way in which Paul alludes to the Song of Moses throughout 1 Cor. 10, Wayne A. Meeks (1982) provides a partial answer to this question. First, Meeks notes that Paul claims that those who sacrifice to idols sacrifice to demons and not to God (θύουσιν δαιμονίοις καὶ οὐ θεῶ, 1 Cor. 10.20).⁴ Similarly Deut. 32.17 condemns Israel for sacrificing to demons and not to God (LXX: ἔθυσαν δαιμονίοις καὶ οὐ θεῶ). The only other LXX passages that mention sacrifice to demons are LXX Ps. 105.37 (MT Ps. 106), which claims that the Israelites ‘sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons’ (ἔθυσαν τοὺς υἱοὺς αὐτῶν καὶ τὰς θυγατέρας αὐτῶν τοῖς δαιμονίοις), and Bar. 4.7, which states, ‘For you provoked the one who made you, sacrificing to demons and not to God’ (παρωξύνατε γὰρ τὸν ποιήσαντα ὑμᾶς θύσαντες δαιμονίοις καὶ οὐ θεῶ), the latter passage being a paraphrase of Deut. 32.16-17 (Moore 1977: 309 n. 7). Since Paul makes no mention of child sacrifice, it is doubtful that he here alludes to LXX Ps. 105, suggesting, therefore, an allusion to the Song of Moses.

1 Corinthians 10.22a contains the second parallel to which Meeks refers. Here Paul asks the Corinthians, ‘Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy?’ (ἢ παραζηλοῦμεν τὸν κύριον;). This question alludes to Deut. 32.21, which portrays God’s complaint against Israel: ‘They have provoked me to jealousy’ (αὐτοὶ παρεζήλωσάν με). The verb παραζηλόω takes God as the direct object only three times in the LXX (Deut. 32.21; 1 Kgs 14.22; Ps. 77.58). In 1 Kgs 14.22 it is Rehoboam who provokes God, an unlikely allusion here in 1 Cor. 10, where Israel’s corporate provocation is in mind. LXX Ps. 77.58, like Deut. 32.21, portrays Israel’s idolatry provoking God, so Paul could also have this psalm in mind, a possibility to which we will return below. In light of these parallels, Meeks (1982: 72) suggests that ‘it may well be that “putting Christ to the test” in verse 9 (if that is the original text) is a midrashic cross-reference to Deuteronomy 32:15, “He (Jeshurun = Israel) scoffed at the Rock of his salvation”’.

Whether Meeks is correct to connect the scoffing (MT: נָבַל; LXX: ἀφίστημι) of Deut. 32.15 to the testing (ἐκπειράζω) of 1 Cor. 10.9 is less certain,⁵ but he has rightly drawn attention to the fact that Paul has the Song of Moses in mind

4. Hays (1989: 93) notes that numerous MSS (including P^{46vid} Ⲛ A C P Ψ 33^{vid}, 81, 104, 315, 630, 1175, 1505, 1739, 2464) add τὰ ἔθνη, thereby obscuring the allusion to Deut. 32.
5. Meeks (1982: 72) suggests that ‘it will not have escaped Paul’s ken that the Hebrew (“to play the fool, mock”) could be yet another synonym for our now familiar παίζειν’. I think it more likely that Paul alludes here to the tradition preserved in Exod. 17.2, 7; Deut. 6.16; 8.2, 16; LXX Pss 77.18, 41, 56; 94.9; and 105.14, which refers to Israel’s testing ([ἐκ]πειράζω) of God in the wilderness.

as he writes 1 Cor. 10.⁶ In fact, one can detect other echoes of Deut. 32 that Meeks does not mention. One of the most audible echoes of the Song occurs at the very beginning of 1 Cor. 10, where Paul claims that the wilderness generation ate (ἔφαγον) the same food and drank (ἔπιον) the same drink from the rock (πέτρα) that followed them (10.3-4). To be sure, as Meeks (1982: 68-69) argues, Paul's reference to eating and drinking in 1 Cor. 10.3-4 is connected to his explicit citation of Exod. 32.6 in 1 Cor. 10.7 ('The people sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play' [ἐκάθισεν ὁ λαὸς φαγεῖν καὶ πίνειν καὶ ἀνέστησαν παίξαι]), yet the combination of references to 'eating', 'drinking' and 'the rock' also evoke the Song of Moses's portrayal of Jeshurun (LXX: Jacob) eating (ἔφαγεν) rich food, drinking (ἔπιον) and being sustained by honey and oil out of the rock (עֵלֶם/πέτρα, צֶרֶף/πέτρα; Deut. 32.13-15) during the wilderness period.

The fact that this passage begins with such an audible biblical echo would alert the ideal reader to the significance of the Song of Moses for Paul's argument.⁷ And such strong allusions to the Song near the beginning (1 Cor. 10.3-4) and end of the passage (1 Cor. 10.20-22) function as scriptural bookends. A reader who has heard such echoes would likely read Paul's claim that God is faithful (πιστὸς δὲ ὁ θεός, 10.13) in light of Deut. 32.4, which likewise calls God faithful (θεὸς πιστός).⁸ That Paul intended this echo is quite likely, since only one other LXX passage, Deut. 7.9, uses the adjective πιστός with reference to θεός. In fact the entirety of 1 Cor. 10.1-22, a passage in which Paul calls his readers to think back to Israel's past, referring to the Israelites of the wilderness generation as his readers' fathers (πατέρες ἡμῶν, 10.1; cf. Deut. 32.7, 17), functions precisely as the Song of Moses was intended to function. Both Paul and the Song call their readers to, in the words of Deut 32.7, 'remember days of old, consider the years of past ages: ask your father (πατέρα σου) and he will recount it to you, and your elders and they will tell you'. As Hays (1989: 94) states,

Paul seizes on Deuteronomy 32 to round off the discussion, because its reminiscence of the wilderness tradition already drives in the direction of hortatory application of the story... Deuteronomy has already performed the imaginative act of turning the exodus into a paradigm for Israel's future experience; consequently, Paul's typological

6. See also Rosner 2007: 130-31.

7. Stanley (2004) raises the question of whether Paul's Gentile churches would have been conversant enough with Jewish Scripture to understand his references and allusions to it. Remarking on this issue, Eastman (2007: 21) states: '[P]art of the transforming power of a text is precisely in the dynamic relationship between the implied and actual readers: Paul's "implied reader" challenges his actual readers to become more knowledgeable about Israel's Scriptures in order to understand what he says'.

8. Hays (1989: 211 n. 30) rightly notes that this is a 'possible echo'.

reading of the story is nothing other than a fresh performance within Israel's long-established poetic-theological tradition.⁹

In summary, 1 Cor. 10.1-22 is replete with allusions to the Song of Moses. The reader attuned to the importance of the Song for Paul's argument based on the wilderness period, would, I believe, have connected Paul's discussion of the wilderness rock in 1 Cor. 10 to the wilderness rock in Deut. 32.13: '[God] brought them up on the strength of the land, he fed them with the produce of the fields. They sucked honey from a rock, and oil from the hard rock' (ἐθήλασαν μέλι ἐκ πέτρας καὶ ἔλαιον ἐκ στερεᾶς πέτρας).

Yet this allusion to the hard rock still leaves the reader wondering how Paul can justify identifying this rock with Christ. The answer lies in the fact that the Song applies rock language (צֹרַר) to Israel's God (Deut. 32.4, 15, 18, 30, 31), as Meeks (1982: 72) notes.¹⁰ In fact, Michael P. Knowles (1989: 307) argues that one of the Song's 'central themes or metaphors is the designation *sûr*, "rock", to describe the God who has established his covenant with Israel'.¹¹ While the Song of Moses contains one of the densest occurrences of rock terminology applied to Israel's God, numerous other passages from Jewish Scripture also refer to Israel's God as the rock.¹² In light of the frequency with which various writers refer to Israel's God by this name, William F. Albright (1968: 188) concludes that '*sûr* is simply a synonym of *El* in early Hebrew literature'. Returning to the Song of Moses, it is conceivable that, since every other occurrence of צֹרַר in the Song refers to a divine being, readers could identify the rock (both סֹלֶע and צֹרַר) in Deut. 32.13 in some way with Israel's God. In fact, just two verses after mentioning the wilderness rock, the Song refers to Israel's God as the rock of (Israel's) salvation (צֹרַר יִשְׁעָתוֹ, v. 15). Since the wilderness rock provided sustenance for Israel in a desolate land, it could be called precisely that: a rock of Israel's salvation.

To be sure, the LXX translator of Deuteronomy removes this potential connection between the wilderness rock, which he translates as πέτρα, and God, by consistently translating צֹרַר as θεός when it refers to divine beings (vv. 4, 15, 18, 30, 31; cf. 37). This translation strategy, Hays suggests, means that while Paul was acquainted with the Hebrew version of the Song of Moses which contained

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9. This understanding coincides with the argument of Thiessen (2004) that the Song of Moses was written in order to serve a hortatory function within a liturgical setting.
 10. Likewise, Hays (1989: 94) states, 'If indeed Paul is reading the wilderness story through the lens of Deut. 32, one puzzling feature of his conceit [i.e., identifying the rock with Christ] turns out to be more explicable'. In contrast, Fee (1987: 449) mentions the appellation 'rock' for God in the Song, but does not connect it to the wilderness rock in Deut. 32.13.
 11. Similarly, Braulik (1986: 228) states that the reference to God as a rock in Deut. 32.4 is a 'programmatische Einführung' to the theme of the Song.
 12. צֹרַר or אֶבֶן: 1 Sam. 2.2; 2 Sam. 22.3, 32, 47; 23.3; Isa. 17.10; 26.4; 30.29; 44.8; Hab. 1.12; Pss 18.2, 31, 46; 19.14; 28.1; 31.2; 61.2; 71.3; 73.26; 78.35; 89.26; 92.15; 94.22; 95.1; 144.1.

this rock language, his readers in Corinth would not have been, since, if they had any knowledge of the Song of Moses, they would likely have known it only in Greek translation. Thus, Hays concludes that ‘it is doubtful that Paul’s readers could have traced the image back to its source in Deut. 32. The Rock echo lies entombed in a Hebrew subtext’ (1989: 94). If Paul does not refer to some aspect of his prior teaching to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 10.4 may be an instance of a gap between the ideal reader of 1 Corinthians and its original recipients.¹³ Nonetheless, if this connection between the wilderness rock and God already existed, as I will argue in the next section, Paul’s audience in Corinth may still have connected the wilderness rock to God, even though the LXX translation no longer facilitated such a reading. Hays’s suggestion provides a plausible explanation for the connection that Paul makes between Christ and the rock.¹⁴ Yet the Song of Moses is not the only biblical support for connecting the wilderness rock to Israel’s God, since this identification exists in the Psalter as well.

God the Rock and the Wilderness Period in the Psalter

In its recounting of Israel’s history from its exodus out of Egypt to the fall of the Northern Kingdom, MT Ps. 78 (LXX Ps. 77) also refers to Israel’s wilderness period.¹⁵ God had led Israel out of Egypt and provided for them in the wilderness:

He led them by cloud during the day, and all night by a light of fire. And he split rocks (MT: סִלְעִים; LXX: πέτρα) in the wilderness, and caused them to drink as from the deeps abundantly. He caused streams to flow from the rock (MT: סִלְעַת; LXX: πέτρα), and caused water to cascade down like rivers (vv. 14-16).

Despite this miraculous provision for them in the wilderness, Israel rebelled against God:

But they sinned against him, rebelling against the Most High in a dry place. And they tested God in their heart, asking for food for their lives. And they spoke against God and said, ‘Is God able to arrange a table in the wilderness? Behold he smote the rock (MT: סִלְעַת; LXX: πέτρα) and waters flowed and streams overflowed. Is he also able to give bread or meat to his people?’ (vv. 17-20).

13. McNamara (1983: 241) speculates that Paul refers ‘to a nonbiblical tradition with which he expects his Corinthian audience to be acquainted or which he himself takes so much for granted that he has forgotten that his Hellenistic or Gentile congregation might not be as well informed in such Jewish lore’.

14. Contrary to the claims of Horsley (1998: 137) and Aageson (2006: 162).

15. For the relationship between Ps. 78 and Deut. 32, see Eissfeldt 1958.

Israel's rebellion and testing of God in the wilderness period occurs yet again once they take possession of the land:

Yet they tested (MT: וַיִּסּוּ; LXX: ἐπείρασαν) and rebelled against God Most High and did not observe his testimonies. And they turned back and acted treacherously like their fathers (MT: כַּאֲבוֹתָם; LXX: καθὼς καὶ οἱ πατέρες αὐτῶν); they turned as a deceitful bow. For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and made him jealous (MT: וַיִּזְעַזְעוּ; LXX: παρεζήλωσαν αὐτόν) with their graven images (78.56-58).

As noted above, Ps. 78.58 and Deut. 32.21 are the only two places in Jewish Scripture where Israel collectively provokes God to jealousy, suggesting that Paul alludes to both of these passages in 1 Cor. 10.22. Karl-Gustav Sandelin (1995: 175) provides further evidence that Paul alludes to Ps. 78, since, again like Deut. 32.17 and 1 Cor. 10.1, the psalm refers to our 'fathers' (Ps. 78.3, 5). Further, Ps. 78 refers to the cloud (νεφέλη in v. 14), sea (θάλασσα in v. 13) and manna (μάννα, ἄρτος οὐρανοῦ, ἄρτος ἁγγέλων in vv. 24-25; cf. 4 Ezra 1.20), details lacking from Deut. 32, but present in 1 Cor. 10.1-3 (νεφέλη and θάλασσα in v. 2; manna, referred to as βρῶμα, in v. 3).¹⁶ Finally, LXX Ps. 77.24-25 (cf. LXX Ps. 104.40) provides some exegetical basis for Paul's claim that the wilderness food was πνευματικόν, since the phrases 'bread of heaven' (ἄρτος οὐρανοῦ) and 'bread of angels' (ἄρτος ἁγγέλων) would have suggested this quality to Paul's thinking.¹⁷ That which is heavenly is πνευματικόν. One can see this identification a few chapters later in Paul's discussion of the resurrection in 1 Cor. 15, where he contrasts the man of heaven (ὁ ἐπουράνιος or ἄνθρωπος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ) to the man of dust (ὁ χοϊκός or ἄνθρωπος ἐκ γῆς), claiming that while the latter is ψυχικός, the former is πνευματικός. That which is of or from heaven, be it a person or bread, must be πνευματικός. Within this context, Ps. 78 claims that only after God had punished them for their unbelief and

16. Meeks (1982: 66), Klauck (1983: 70), Fee (1987: 442) and Thiselton (2000: 723) also mention the similar purposes of Ps. 78, Deut. 32.1-43 and 1 Cor. 10.1-13, but fail to see these verbal commonalities. Zeller (2010: 327) sees the connection between 1 Cor. 10 and Ps. 78.24, noting also Ps. 105.40, Neh. 9.15 and Wis. 16.20. Fisk (2008: 119) notes that *LAB* also refers to the cloud and manna, as well as mentioning the quail (10.7; 20.8).

17. Fisk (2008: 132 n. 42) also makes this point. The reference to honey and oil in Deut. 32.13 also appears to be an allusion to the wilderness provision of manna, which tasted like both honey and oil (Exod. 16.31; Num. 11.8; cf. Philo, *Worse* 115). If so, the Song of Moses portrays the rock providing manna in the wilderness. Such a portrayal might have influenced Paul, since Bandstra (1971: 12) argues that in 10.4 Paul portrays Israel obtaining both πνευματικόν drink and πνευματικόν food from the πνευματικόν rock. Cf. Frick 1999.

rebellion did Israel turn back to God: ‘They remembered that God was their rock (צור), the Most High God their redeemer’ (v. 35).¹⁸

Like Ps. 78, Ps. 95 (LXX Ps. 94) characterizes the wilderness period as a time of hardened hearts:

Do not harden your hearts as at Meribah, as on the day of Massah in the wilderness, when your fathers tested (MT: נִסּוּנִי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם; LXX: ἐπείρασαν οἱ πατέρες ὑμῶν) me, tried me, even though they had seen my work. Forty years I loathed this generation (vv. 8-10).¹⁹

Like the Song of Moses, Ps. 78 and 1 Cor. 10, Ps. 95 uses the wilderness generation as a warning to its hearers and refers to it as ‘your fathers’ (οἱ πατέρες ὑμῶν). Again, like Ps. 78, Ps. 95 refers to God as a rock: ‘Come, let us sing to Yhwh, let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation’ (צור ישענו, v. 1; cf. Deut. 32.15: צור ישעתו). Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger (2005: 460) note that the ‘title “rock of our salvation” is rich in associations: the rock of Zion, the rock in the desert, or the rock as symbol of security and rescue’. While all of these associations are possible, the psalmist mentions the desert rock explicitly only a few verses later, suggesting an identification with this specific rock.

While numerous psalms (Pss 18.2, 31, 46; 19.14; 28.1; 31.2-3; 61.2; 71.3; 73.26; 78.35; 89.26; 92.15; 94.22; 95.1; 144.1) refer to Israel’s God as a rock, the Song of Moses, Ps. 78 and Ps. 95 use this language within the context of portrayals of Israel’s wilderness period. They recite aspects of this period in order to use Israel’s fathers as examples or warnings (or τύποι as Paul says in 1 Cor. 10.6)²⁰ for the contemporary generation of Israel. Given the fact that the Song of Moses and Ps. 78 also mention the wilderness rock from which water sprang forth, it is conceivable that readers/hearers could have identified the wilderness rock (צור) with God the rock (צור).²¹

18. If I am correct in claiming that Paul identifies the wilderness rock of Ps. 78 with Christ, he is not the only early believer in Christ to find him in Ps. 78, since Jn 6.31-35 appears to identify Christ with the manna of Ps. 78. See Menken 1988 and Swancutt 1997.

19. Again, Sandelin (1995: 179) notes the similar function of Ps. 95 and 1 Cor. 10.

20. Thiselton (2000: 730) rightly notes that scholarship on the passage has been unduly influenced by interpreters’ presuppositions as to what Paul means by τύποι (typology? allegory? etc.). The argument of this article suggests that Paul means little else other than that the events of the wilderness generation function as examples or warnings to those in Corinth.

21. In contrast, Ps. 105 and Neh. 9 also recount Israel’s wilderness and refer to the wilderness rock, but do not call Israel’s God ‘rock’.

God as Rock in Prophetic Literature

Prophetic literature also preserves evidence of the word ‘rock’ being used as an appellation for God within the context of the wilderness period. Hans M. Barstad (1989) has argued that Deutero-Isaiah presents the envisaged return from exile as a second exodus.²² Thus the work begins by portraying a voice crying out, ‘In the wilderness prepare the way of Yhwh’ (40.3), and contains wilderness imagery throughout (see, for instance, 41.18-19; 43.19-20; 51.3). God promises to protect Israel as it passes through waters and rivers, again evoking the exodus narratives (43.2, 16). Significantly, Deutero-Isaiah also uses rock language with reference to God: ‘Is there a God besides me? There is no rock; I know not one’ (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי מַבְלַעַדִּי וְאֵין צוּר בַּל יִדְעָתִי) (εἴ ἔστιν θεὸς πλὴν ἐμοῦ· καὶ οὐκ ἦσαν τότε, 44.8; cf. 17.20; 26.4; 30.29; 51.1 [for the LXX omission here, see below]). This claim, within the context of God’s promise to ‘pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground’ (Isa. 44.3), evokes traditions of the rock providing water for Israel in the wilderness. It is possible that there is a shared tradition between the Song of Moses and Isa. 44, since both use the uncommon name ‘Jeshurun’ for Israel (Deut. 32.15; Isa. 44.2). Apart from these two verses, Jeshurun occurs only two other times, both in Deut. 33 (vv. 5 and 26). Again, like Deut. 32 and Ps. 78, LXX Deutero-Isaiah refers to Israel’s fathers (LXX: οἱ πατέρες ὑμῶν; MT: אֲבוֹתָיִךְ) who have sinned. It appears, therefore, that Deutero-Isaiah depends upon wilderness traditions about water coming out of a rock in the desert, connects them to claims that God is a rock, but then omits any specific reference to the actual rock out of which the water came. In the context of a new or second exodus, God is portrayed as a rock that makes water flow in a dry land (48.21).

Finally, although Jer. 2 does not use any rock language (צוּר, אֲבֶן or סֶלַע), it is also significant for understanding 1 Cor. 10.4 and related traditions about the wilderness, since it appears that Jeremiah takes the tradition of calling God a rock and modifies it in light of his theological sensibilities. That Jeremiah knows of and reinterprets this tradition is likely, since, as William L. Holladay (1966: 19) has argued, Jeremiah was dependent upon Moses traditions, especially the Song of Moses.

The parallels to Deut. 32 are perhaps most concentrated in Jer. 2. First, and more broadly, Jer. 2 is God’s lawsuit (רִיב) against Israel, in which he asks them why they have rebelled yet bring a רִיב against him (2.29). Although Deut. 32 does not explicitly use רִיב language, modern scholars have identified its form in the Song (Wright 1962 and Thiessen 2004). Second, both Jer. 2 and the Song of Moses portray Israel forsaking God and going after emptiness (Jer. 2.5: וַיִּהְיוּ כַּמֵּת וַיִּהְיוּ כַּבְּהֵמָה; Deut. 32.21: בַּהֲבִלֵיהֶם), despite the fact that Israel found no

22. In addition to Barstad, see Berges 2004.

fault (עול) with God (Jer. 2.5; Deut. 32.4). Both Deut. 32.17 and Jer. 2.5 draw the reader's attention to Israel's sinful fathers (אבותיכם), with Jeremiah calling the present generation to consider the word of Yhwh (2.31). Jeremiah 2.11 refers to the gods of the nations as 'no gods' (לֹא אֱלֹהִים), while the Song of Moses claims that Israel sacrificed to demons, that is, to no god or a 'no-god' (אֱלֹהִים לֹא, Deut. 32.17; לֹא אֱלֹהִים, Deut. 32.21). The Song of Moses begins by calling the heaven and earth to listen to the contents of the Song (Deut. 32.1); Jeremiah calls to the heavens to be appalled, shocked and desolate (Jer. 2.12). Additionally, in the Hebrew Bible only Deut. 32.16, Jer. 2.25 and Jer. 3.13 use the word זָרִים ('strangers') to refer to foreign gods. Finally, only the Song of Moses and Jer. 2 ask Israel where its gods are (Deut. 32.37: אֵי אֱלֹהֵימוֹ; Jer. 2.28: אַיִה אֱלֹהֶיךָ), and call Israel to cry out to these gods to rise up (יִקוּמוּ) and save them.²³ As Holladay (1966: 21) states, 'No pre-Jeremianic prophet offers parallels to the Song of Moses to this degree'.²⁴ These parallels between Jer. 2 and the Song of Moses suggest the literary dependence of the former on the latter.

In the context of this discussion of Israel's wilderness period, Jeremiah's portrayal of God as a spring of living waters takes on great significance for our discussion.²⁵ Jeremiah 2.12-13 states:

Be appalled, O heavens, at this, be horrified, be very devastated, says Yhwh, for two evils have my people done: they have forsaken me, the spring of living waters (מִקְוֵי מַיִם חַיִּים; LXX: πηγῆν ὕδατος ζωνῆς), and hewed out cisterns (בְּאֵרוֹת) for themselves, broken cisterns (בְּאֵרוֹת/λάκκους συντετριμμένους), that can hold no water.

In Jer. 2, the use of the phrase 'spring of living waters' to represent God parallels the Song of Moses's portrayal of God as a rock. The imagery in Jer. 2.13 has Israel leaving the well of living water for cisterns that they have made with their own hands—cisterns which can hold no water. This accusation parallels Deut. 32 where Israel is accused of abandoning the Rock for other rocks (Deut. 32.15-16).

Jeremiah's portrayal of Israel's God as a spring of living water in contrast to other gods as leaky cisterns stresses that only Israel's God is the source of life-giving nourishment; the promises of other gods do not hold water. The numerous parallels between Jer. 2 and the Song of Moses demonstrate Jeremiah's creative reuse of the Song for his own purposes. Thus, where the Song refers to God (and

23. Numerous passages (2 Kgs 2.14; 18.34; Isa. 36.19; Joel 2.17; Mic. 7.10; Mal. 2.17; Pss. 42.3, 10; 79.10; 115.2) ask where a god or gods are, but only these two ask Israel where its gods are.

24. Lundbom (1999: 258) notes, 'The only demonstrated influence upon 2.5-9 is from the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32... Yahweh's gracious deeds are followed by Israel's ingratitude and settlement in the land is the time when things began to go wrong'.

25. On the use of this image to represent the divine, see Holt 2005.

all gods) in rock language, Jeremiah uses spring language. This parallel suggests that Jeremiah has understood the rock references to God in Deut. 32 to be closely connected to the rock of Deut. 32.13, and Deut. 32.13 to be a reference to Israel's God, but has modified the language to something more theologically amenable in light of his own suspicions about making a connection between the divine and stones:

As a thief is ashamed when he is caught, so the house of Israel will be ashamed: they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets, who say to a tree (יָעֵ/טֹף ξύλω), 'You are my father,' and to a stone, 'You gave birth to me' (MT: אֵת יִלְדֵתֵנִי לִאֲבִן; LXX: τὸν λίθω Σὺ ἐγέννησάς με; Jer. 2.26-27).²⁶

Interestingly, the language of Jer. 2.27 parallels almost exactly the language of the Song of Moses, which refers to Israel's God as a rock who gave birth to them (MT Deut. 32.18: יִלְדֵךְ צוֹר; LXX: θεὸν τὸν γεννήσαντά σε). Perhaps it is precisely this concern which encouraged Jeremiah to change the rock language of God to the language of a spring of living waters.

Jeremiah 2 thus provides early confirmation for my suggestion above that the rock in Deut. 32.13 could be connected to God the Rock. While retaining the portrayal of God as one who provides drink in the wilderness, Jeremiah exchanges rock language for spring language. Jeremiah may also be dependent upon pentateuchal wilderness traditions, such as Exod. 15.27 and Num. 33.9, which mention the springs (יָעֵ/πηγή) of water at Elim. That is, perhaps Jeremiah attests an early tradition in which the wilderness rock and the wilderness spring are closely connected, if not fully identified with one another. One can see this connection in Ps. 114.8, which refers to pools and springs (יָעֵ/πηγή) of water which came out of the rock (צוֹר/πέτρα) and flint (שִׁמְשֵׁ/ἀκρότομος). Similarly, whereas MT Deut. 8.15 refers to water coming from the flinty rock (מִיִּם מִצוֹר הַחֲלֹמִישׁ), the LXX translator renders this phrase as 'out of the flinty rock a spring of water' (ἐκ πέτρας ἀκροτόμου πηγὴν ὕδατος), again thereby forging a possible connection between the wilderness rock and the wilderness spring.

Growing Unease with Rock Language in Early Judaism

If I am correct in understanding Jeremiah's language of God as a well or a spring as his attempt to move away from rock language used of Israel's God, this

26. Similarly, Habakkuk mocks the person who worships tree or stone: 'Woe to the one who says to a tree (יָעֵ/טֹף ξύλω), "Awake," and to a dumb stone (אֵת יִלְדֵתֵנִי לִאֲבִן), "Arise." Can this give revelation? Behold, it is covered with gold and silver, and there is not any breath in it' (Hab. 2.19).

modification fits with a broader unease that developed in ancient Jewish thinking about God. Of those passages which refer to God as צור, the different LXX translators, regardless of their various translation techniques, almost universally render this word in non-rock language.²⁷

For instance, Gen. 49.24 refers to God as ‘the stone of Israel’ (אבן ישראל), but the LXX translator renders אבן as κατισχύσας (‘the strong one/one who strengthened’).²⁸ As mentioned above, the LXX translator of Deut. 32 changes צור to θεός in 32.4, 15, 18, 30 and 31.²⁹ The Greek translation of 1–2 Samuel renders צור as φύλαξ (‘guard’, 2 Sam. 22.3, 4; 23.3) or κτίστης (‘creator’, 2 Sam. 22.32).³⁰ Additionally, he renders סלע as πέτρα μου (2 Sam. 22.2) and translates אבן העזר as λίθος του βοηθού (‘stone of help’, 1 Sam. 7.12), when both passages seem to identify the rock with God.

The LXX translation of Isaiah renders צור as κυρίως (‘Lord’, 17.10), ὁ θεός ὁ μέγας (‘the great God’, 26.4) or θεός (‘God’, 30.29; 44.8).³¹ The LXX translator of Hab. 1.12 deals with צור by omitting it entirely. In the Psalter, the book of the Hebrew Bible which most frequently uses rock language of God, the term צור is rendered as βοηθός (‘helper’, MT Ps. 18.3, 19.14; 78.35; 92.16; 94.22), θεός (‘God’, MT 18.32, 47; 28.1; 31.3; 62.3, 6, 7; 71.3; 73.26; 95.1; 144.1)³² and ἀντιλήμπτωρ (‘supporter’, MT 89.27). In addition, the translator renders סלע as στερέωμα (‘steadfastness’, MT Ps. 18.3; 71.3), κρατῖωμα (‘strength’, MT 31.4) and ἀντιλήμπτωρ (‘helper’, MT 42.10). Finally, MT Ps. 61.3 refers to the rock that is higher (צור ירום) than the psalmist, and the LXX translator here renders it as πέτρα, possibly understanding this phrase to refer to Jerusalem or the Temple, despite the fact that the next verse appears to identify this high rock with God, who is a refuge and strong tower.

The only places, therefore, where a Greek translator of the Hebrew Bible renders rock imagery used clearly of God with rock language in Greek are 1 Sam.

27. Similarly, the Targumim consistently translate ‘rock’, when used of God, as ‘Strong One’. As Jeffrey Wickes informs me, so do the translators of the Peshitta.

28. MS 44 reads κατισχύσουν, MS 610 reads κατίσχυσεν, and MSS 54, A, 121 read κατοικήσας. See Wevers 1974: 464. Gruenwald (1996: 429) suggests that Ps. 118.20 might also use אבן in reference to God, but acknowledges that the referent is ambiguous.

29. Additionally, even where the Song of Moses refers to foreign gods as rocks, the LXX translator renders it with θεός. Although a number of variants exist in these verses, all LXX manuscripts remove the rock language when it pertains to the divine. See Wevers 1977.

30. In one additional place (1 Sam. 2.2), the MT states, ‘There is no rock like our God (אין צור כאלהינו)’, where the Greek, possibly dependent upon a Hebrew *Vorlage* that differed from the MT, states, ‘There is no one holy like you’ (οὐκ ἔστιν ἅγιος πλην σου).

31. Ziegler (1939) confirms that all LXX manuscripts of Isaiah modify this rock imagery.

32. Again, there is some variation in the LXX manuscripts to the Psalter. See Rahlfs 1979.

7.12 and 2 Sam. 22.2.³³ Overall, then, one can see a widespread movement away from rock language used in reference to God. Consequently, readers whose only knowledge of Jewish Scripture was via a Greek translation of the Hebrew would not have seen how frequently Israelite authors referred to Israel's God as a rock. While Hebrew readers could have made the connection between the wilderness rock and Israel's divine rock in Deut. 32, Ps. 78 and Ps. 95 (and elsewhere), this verbal connection would not have been readily available to readers of Jewish Scripture translated into Greek.

Nonetheless, this does not mean that, by the first century CE, Jews had stopped using rock language in reference to God. At roughly the same time that the various LXX translators were removing rock language, other Jews continued to use it, as a number of works preserved at Qumran demonstrate. For instance, the Habakkuk Peshier does not remove this language from Habakkuk, nor does it explain it away: 'You have marked them for judgment, O Rock (צור), You have made them for rebuke...' (1QpHab. 5.1; cf. Hab. 1.12). Reminiscent of the Psalter, the Thanksgiving Scroll refers to God as 'my Rock' (צור) and 'rock' (סלע), 1QHodayot 19.18; 17.28; cf. 14.29; 15.11). Similarly, 4Q377 states that Moses taught Israel that 'there is no God but [Israel's God], and no rock like him' (אין אלוה מבלעדיו ואין צור כמוהו), frag. 1 II.8). In a rehearsal of Israel's history, 4Q504 confesses on Israel's behalf that 'we have wearied our God with our iniquities, and worked the Rock with our sins' (העבדנו צור בחטנותנו); frags. 1-2 V.19).³⁴ Finally, 4Q381, quoting Ps. 18.2, states that God's name is 'my salvation, my rock (סלע), my fortress, my deliverer'. Thus, while our evidence is sparse, the Qumran community provides evidence that some Jews continued to use rock language of God in the centuries leading up to Paul's day. Perhaps the Qumran community continued to use such language because it had scriptural warrant for doing so and was not greatly concerned that this language would be taken to refer to graven images.

Modern Unease and the Movement to Metaphorical Interpretation

Like the translators of the LXX, modern interpreters almost universally understand the rock imagery of the Old Testament to be a metaphor, one that perhaps stresses God's faithfulness, strength, or some other aspect of the divine character.

33. The Greek translators of 1-4 Kingdoms always render צור in reference to God metaphorically, but render סלע and אבן literally when used of God. It seems more likely that translators unthinkingly used stereotyped equivalents (where they render סלע and אבן elsewhere they always use πέτρα and λίθος, respectively) in these two cases, than that they found acceptable this particular rock language used of the divine.

34. There is some uncertainty on the reconstruction of צור in this line.

For instance, Knowles (1989: 322) claims, '[S]ûr functions in the Hebrew scriptures as a metaphoric appellative or epithet for the God of Israel. While the use of the term itself has been derived from the common stock of Semitic religion, it has been subsumed and suitably modified under the aegis of the Yahweh cult.'³⁵ But how can Knowles, or any modern reader, know that such language is metaphoric? Nothing within any of these passages precludes the possibility of a non-metaphoric use of rock language. The assertion that this language is merely metaphoric, in conjunction with the acknowledgment that Semitic religion in general used such terminology non-metaphorically of divine beings, suggests that Knowles has moved from historical description to theological prescription. To be sure, Knowles's interpretation has prestigious antecedents in the LXX translations, as well as other early translations such as the Peshitta and Targumim.

Nonetheless, as Ithamar Gruenwald (1996: 432) argues, 'metaphoricism, as a hermeneutic principle, is very likely to do the opposite of what is expected. Instead of making us hear the voice of the text in all its clarity, it may critically distort the issues involved.' To assume that ancient Israelite or early Jewish writers could not use rock language literally might do injustice to ancient theologizing. One can see in Knowles's claim (that such language has been 'suitably modified under the aegis of the Yahweh cult') the modern concern to protect against any interpretation which leads to close contact between Israelite religion and other ancient Near Eastern religious beliefs. Yet Gruenwald (1996: 432) rightly argues that 'scholars should be exempted from the task of having to upgrade seemingly ambiguous texts to the status of theological formulations that are dictated by rationalistic assumptions'. While modern interpreters may find such language problematic, ancients might not have. And to attempt to clean up such language, in the way that the LXX translators did some 2000 years ago, might actually cloud ancient perceptions of the divine, more than clarify them. In fact, the recent work of Benjamin Sommer suggests that interpreters have indeed modernized, and thereby made opaque, ancient theologizing. At least some Israelites felt comfortable connecting the presence of the divine to rocks, suggesting that when 'rock' language is used of God it should be taken literally.

Israel and God's Rock Body

In his groundbreaking work, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel*, Sommer (2009: 12) argues, 'For ancient Near Eastern religions, gods could have multiple bodies and fluid selves'. In Akkadian texts, for example, Sommer (2009: 23) notes, 'The *šalmu* was a body of the god, but it did not exhaust that god's being; it was itself a god, assimilated into the heavenly god

35. Knowles's comments are representative of much scholarship. See, for instance, Eichhorn 1972, Terrien 1998 and Fischer 2009.

yet physically a distinct thing that could lose its divine status at any moment, should the deity choose to abandon it'.³⁶ Contrary to much modern scholarship, Sommer (2009: 38-57) makes a compelling case that many ancient Israelites also held to this conception of divine fluidity, as the JE source attests.³⁷ For instance, a number of stories portray humans interacting with an angel/messenger of Yhwh (מַלְאֲכַי יְהוָה) (e.g., Gen. 18–19; 32), who appears to be 'a small scale manifestation of God's own presence', since, in these narratives, 'the distinction between the messenger and God is murky' (Sommer 2009: 40; cf. Hamori 2008). What is more, numerous biblical narratives suggest that Israel's God might inhabit other bodies, such as sticks and stones (Sommer 2009: 49-54).³⁸ We see later prophetic literature ridiculing this belief, thus implicitly attesting its existence in some circles. While Jeremiah and Habakkuk provide a blanket condemnation of the cultic use of wood and stone, as noted above, other biblical passages, particularly in the patriarchal narratives, provide a different perspective.

One of the most telling passages is the story of Jacob's night in Bethel (Gen. 28.11-22), where God appears to him in the night. When he wakes from this vision, Jacob states, 'Surely Yhwh is in this place;³⁹ and I did not know it... How fearful is this place! This is none other than the house of God (בֵּית אֱלֹהִים), and this is the gate of heaven.' The narrator states that, after rising in the morning, Jacob 'took the stone that was there at his head, and he made it a pillar (מַצְבֵּה) and poured oil on its head. And he called the name of that place Beth-el (בֵּית אֵל)' (Gen. 28.16-19). Later God reappears to him, recalling Jacob's night at Bethel: 'I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and made a vow to me' (RSV Gen. 31.13) The RSV translation here, as Sommer points out, is grammatically impossible since the Hebrew reads אֵל בֵּית אֵל. Since the definite article cannot be attached to the first noun in a construct chain, one cannot translate this phrase 'the God of Beth-el'; instead, the verse should be translated either as 'I am the God in Beth-el' or as 'I am the God Beth-el' (2009: 50).⁴⁰ If the former is the correct translation, then God is claiming that he is the God

36. For a fuller discussion of divine fluidity in the ANE, see Sommer (2009: 12-37).

37. In contrast, Sommer (2009: 58-79) argues that the later strands of the Pentateuch reject this model of divine fluidity, referring to God's presence as his 'glory' (כְּבוֹד) in priestly texts or his 'name' (שֵׁם) in deuteronomic texts.

38. For archaeological evidence for this use of stones, see Graesser 1972.

39. As Gruenwald (1996: 445) notes, both Philo (*On Dreams* 1.61-64) and *Gen. R.* 68.9 understand the Hebrew word מְקוֹם ('place') as a title for God.

40. Supporting the first possibility, Sommer (2009: 207 n. 74) points out that the preposition בְּ can assimilate into a word that begins with בְּ or בֵּ. One could follow the longer reading of the LXX here, which reads ὁ θεὸς ὁ ὀφθείσ σοι ἐν τόπῳ θεοῦ ('the God who appeared to you in the place of God'). Cf. the targumic renderings in both *Tg. Onqelos* and *Tg. Pseudo-Jonathan*.

who dwells in the *beth-el*, that is, the anointed stone or *betyl*. Finally, Gen. 35.13-14 states:

And God went up from the place where he spoke with him. And Jacob set up a pillar (מצבתה) in the place where he had spoken with him, a pillar of stone (אבן), and he poured out a drink offering on it, and poured oil on it. And Jacob called the name of the place where God had spoken with him Beth-el (בית אל).

Sommer compares Jacob's act of anointing the stone with oil to the Mesopotamian *mīs pī* ('mouth-washing') ritual, by which an image of a divine being was transformed into an embodiment of the divine presence; that is, the statue or cultic object becomes the body of a god, not merely a representation of it.⁴¹ Jacob sets up a stone and anoints it, calling the place *beth-el*. Because of this ritual 'what had been a mere stone becomes a *massebah* or *betyl*, a place of divine dwelling' (Sommer 2009: 49).⁴² Jacob explicitly affirms this interpretation, stating: 'This stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be the house of God (בית אל הים, v. 22)'. Further, George W. Savran (2005: 63) has suggested that Jacob's dream of a ladder set up (מצב, v. 12) on the ground with God standing (נצב, v. 13) at the top of it leads him to set up a stone pillar (מצבתה, vv. 18, 22). Building on Savran's observations, Sommer (2009: 206 n. 65) concludes that 'this passage describes a case of the transcendent [*sic*] God who נצב (stands) [at the top of a standing (מצב) ladder], allowing Himself to become immanent below in a מצבתה (stele)'.

Although Sommer does not mention the wilderness rock (either of the wilderness narratives or the poetic works of Deut. 32, Ps. 78 and Ps. 95) in his discussion of the divine inhabiting stones, Gruenwald (1996: 442 [emphasis original]) does, albeit briefly:

When *spoken to* (Num. 20:7 ff.) or beaten with the magical staff of Moses (Exod. 17:7), a divine rock could even render drinking water, whatever that meant. When that rock was not properly handled, God himself was virtually desecrated, and the people involved—in this case, Moses and Aaron—were severely punished.

The two stories of the wilderness rock in Exod. 17 and Num. 20 take on new significance in light of Sommer's argument. Not only do numerous passages in Jewish Scripture refer to God using rock language, but at least some Israelites also had no problem with the idea that God might reside in or take up the body of a rock. Given these facts, it is not surprising that the Song of Moses, Ps. 78

41. On the *mīs pī* ritual, and the related *pīl pī* ('mouth-opening') ritual, see Sommer 2009: 19-24. For in-depth treatments, see Berlejung 1997: 45-72, Dick 1999, Hurowitz 2003 and 2006.

42. Sommer (2009: 207 n. 67) notes that a number of midrashim, such as *Gen. R.* 69.7 and *PRE* 35, stress that the oil Jacob used on the stone was from heaven.

and Ps. 95 refer to Israel's God as a rock in the context of narrating Israel's wilderness period and the rock that provided water.

And, in fact, despite a wider trend in early Judaism to interpret rock language metaphorically, Philo provides evidence that some Jews in the first century CE could and did understand this wilderness rock to refer to a hypostasis of the divine. In his allegorical interpretation of Israel's wilderness wanderings, Philo states that the sharp rock is the 'wisdom of God' (ἡ ἀκρότομος πέτρα ἡ σοφία τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστίν, *Alleg. Interp.* 2.86; cf. Deut. 8.15; LXX Ps. 113.8; Wis. 11.4), providing a stream of water, which he likewise identifies as the 'sharp wisdom of God' (ἡ ἀκρότομος σοφία), for the soul. As Kreitzer (1993: 118) notes, Philo's use of the same adjective for both God's wisdom and the rock strengthens the connection between the two. According to Philo, this rock, that is wisdom, is the first and highest thing that God quarried out of his own powers (ἄκραν καὶ πρωτίστην ἔτεμεν ἀπὸ τῶν ἑαυτοῦ δυνάμεων). Elsewhere Philo again connects the wisdom of God to the waters that stream out of the wilderness rock (*On Dreams* 2.221). Quoting Exod. 17.6 ('Here I stand before you there upon [ἐπί] the rock in Horeb'), Philo claims that this divine utterance is equivalent to saying that God is everywhere (πανταχοῦ) and fills all things (πεπληρωκῶς τὰ πάντα), being set upon the sharpest and most ancient ruling power (ἐπὶ τῆς ἀκροτάτης καὶ πρεσβυτάτης ἰδρυμένος δυνάμεως ἀρχῆς), from which the stream of wisdom overflowed (τὸ σοφίας ἐπλήμμυρε νᾶμα). Here Philo makes the startling claim that God's statement that he dwelt upon (ἐπὶ) the rock in Horeb signifies that God is omnipresent and permeates all things; that is, God dwells not merely upon the rock, but even in it. And Philo identifies this rock with the sharpest (ἀκροτάτη; cf. *Alleg. Interp.* 2.86) ruling power, which is a source of God's wisdom. Yet again, Philo, in commenting on Deut. 32.13, states that the rock refers to 'the solid and indestructible wisdom of God' (πέτραν τὴν στερεὰν καὶ ἀδιάκοπον ἐμφαίνων σοφίαν θεοῦ, *Worse* 115), which he claims is identified with manna—the divine word (λόγος θεῖος, *Worse* 118). These three passages, therefore, identify the wilderness rock as a source of God's wisdom. Consequently, Philo provides evidence that at least one of Paul's contemporaries continued to connect the wilderness rock closely to Israel's God.

Paul and the Bodies of Christ

While Sommer (2009: 132) documents the decline in Jewish belief in divine fluidity, he makes the provocative claim that '[i]t is immediately evident that the fluidity traditions from the Hebrew Bible and the ancient Near East found expression in Christianity'. Although he does not mention Paul specifically, his broad comments on Christian thinking apply well to Paul. If this article correctly links Paul's interpretation of the wilderness rock with ancient Israelite conceptions of

the divine body, then Paul's views of Christ and his interpretation of the rock have firm antecedents in the Jewish Scripture.

Thus, Paul is not allegorically, metaphorically or typologically identifying the rock with Christ. Rather, he is making the claim that the *pneumatic* rock was Christ; that is to say, Christ was pneumatically present in the *physical* rock at the time Israel wandered in the wilderness.⁴³ It is here where a proper understanding of *pneuma* and the adjective *pneumatikos* is so important. As Dale B. Martin (1995) and Troels Engberg-Pedersen (2006, 2010) have argued, Paul's conception of the *pneuma* is greatly indebted to Stoic physics, which conceived of the *pneuma* in materialistic terms. The *pneuma* was not some spiritual (i.e., non-material) entity, but a very subtle, sublime form of matter akin, if not equal, to *aether* (cf. Chrysippus, *SVF* 2.471). As such, according to the Stoic theory of *krasis*, *pneuma* was able to completely interpenetrate other, coarser forms of matter in such a way that 'it was capable of blending itself with different bodies, so that every part of the original body, while maintaining its own character, still participates fully in the mixture' (Johnson Hodge 2007: 75; cf. Sambursky 1959 and Todd 1976). The physical rock, interpenetrated by Christ, was simultaneously the pneumatic rock which could provide pneumatic food and drink (these latter two benefits clearly not being spiritual in the sense of non-materialistic). This article thus provides further confirmation for the claim of Hamerton-Kelly (1973: 132) that this passage demonstrates that Paul believed in the pre-existence of Christ: '[T]he use of the imperfect (ἦν) in 10:4 shows that Paul has the real pre-existence of Christ in mind and not simply a typological identification between the rock and Christ'.⁴⁴

Yet even more than this, it shows that Paul identifies Christ with Israel's God, for whereas Deut. 32, Ps. 78 and Ps. 95 identify the wilderness rock with Israel's God, Paul identifies it with Christ. This move fits within a broader trend of Paul's thought which connects Christ to Israel's God.⁴⁵ For instance, in light of the LXX translators' habit of translating the divine name Yhwh as κύριος, Paul's frequent references to Christ as κύριος suggests that he identifies Christ with Yhwh. Further, David B. Capes has analyzed 14 passages in which Paul quotes

43. As R. Wenning (2001) demonstrates, the idea that the divine could inhabit such things as rocks would not have surprised Paul's Gentile readers, given the use of *betyl*s in the Greco-Roman world. Cf. Philo of Byblos 790F 2,223; Pliny, *Natural History* 37.135.

44. In addition to Hamerton-Kelly, see the discussions of Hanson 1965: 16-23; Schrage 1991: II, 395-96; Ellis 1993: 171; Dunn 1998: 279-80; Schnabel 2006: 530-31. In contrast to Collins (1999: 365) and others, who wrongly suggest that Paul identifies the rock 'allegorically' as Christ, Schnabel states: 'Wie Paulus die Bezeichnung Gottes als "Herr" auf Jesus übertrug, so bezeichnet er Christus als "Felsen" analog der atl. Beschreibung Gottes als "Fels", auf den Israel sich verlassen kann'.

45. See, for instance, Kreitzer 1987, Capes 1992, Hurtado 2003: 108-18, Fee 2007 and Bauckham 2008: 186-232.

Yhwh texts from Jewish Scripture and concludes that in half of these instances he identifies κύριος with Christ and in the other half he identifies κύριος with God. As Capes (1992: 185) concludes, Paul ‘occasionally applied to Jesus texts originally referring to Yahweh. Given his high regard for scripture, this exegetical practice means that Paul considered Jesus to be a manifestation of Yahweh. It means that he identified Jesus with Yahweh in a substantive way’. Returning to 1 Cor. 10.4, Paul’s claim that the wilderness rock was Christ contains within it a surprisingly high Christological implication: by claiming that the rock was Christ, Paul identifies Christ with Israel’s God.

Just as ancient Israelites could envisage God becoming embodied in numerous objects (even at the same time), Paul envisages Christ becoming embodied in a rock (1 Cor. 10.4). That this is no mere metaphor or allegorical interpretation is demonstrated quite clearly by the fact that Paul, both in 1 Corinthians and elsewhere, mentions Christ inhabiting other bodies consisting of matter equally as coarse as rock, some of which he inhabits simultaneously. Thus, Paul claims that Christ had recently taken upon himself a single human flesh-and-blood body (Rom. 1.3; Gal. 4.4). Then, upon his resurrection, Christ’s body was transformed into a raised pneumatic body in order to ascend to heaven (i.e. the kingdom of God), since a flesh-and-blood body cannot inherit it (1 Cor. 15.42-50).⁴⁶ At the same time that Christ has become a life-giving *pneuma* (1 Cor. 15.45; 2 Cor. 3.17), he can continue to take the body of more coarse matter, such as bread and wine (1 Cor. 10.16-17; 11.23-30) and a multitude of flesh-and-blood human bodies (1 Cor. 12.13-31).

Conclusion

Paul’s claim that Christ was the rock that provided Israel with pneumatic food and drink in the wilderness is indebted to a scriptural tradition, attested in such texts as Deut. 32, Ps. 78 and Ps. 95, that frequently refers to Israel’s God with rock language. Significantly, these three texts refer to God as a rock within the context of Israel’s wilderness period, thereby suggesting a connection between the wilderness rock and Israel’s God. While most scholars have taken this language to be metaphoric, Benjamin Sommer has shown that stones were one of many types of material that gods were thought to inhabit both in the ancient Near East and among some Israelites. At the same time that Paul is indebted to the connection that Deut. 32, Ps. 78 and Ps. 95 forge between Israel’s God and the wilderness rock, Paul’s thinking about Christ as a life-giving *pneuma* is indebted to Greco-Roman conceptions, and Stoic conceptions more specifically, of the *pneuma* as a subtle matter which could permeate coarser types of matter. Thus

46. Following the interpretations of Martin (1995: 104-36) and Engberg-Pederson (2010: 8-38).

Paul's belief in the bodily fluidity of Christ springs out of both an ancient Near Eastern and a Stoic background.

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